PROJECT OVERSIGHT REPORT

Service, Knowledge, and Information Exchange
System (SKIES)
Employment Security Department (ESD)

Report as of Date:
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Executive Sponsor: Paul Trause

Description: WorkSource Washington, this state's brand name for the One-Stop Career Center, is a federally-sponsored, national initiative to change the way employment-related services are provided to job seekers and employers. Previously, job seekers and employers found services by traveling to several different agencies at different locations. With the implementation of WorkSource, customers are able to receive the services they need from a single career development center, convenient affiliate sites, or self-service sites throughout the state. This new system is based upon four core principles: universal access, customer choice/focus, integrated services, and accountability.

Technology: The WorkSource One-Stop Operating System (OSOS), which has been renamed SKIES, will be a transfer system based upon Utah's UWORKS version of OSOS. The SKIES architecture contains three tiers: an Oracle database server, an applications server, and client software that employs web browser software (Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer). The system will be built and maintained using the Oracle Development tool set. The Oracle Application Server resides on an IBM RS/6000 hardware platform running the AIX UNIX operating system.

Life Cycle Stage: Implementation

Budget: The total federal implementation One-Stop grant that ended in 2000 was $9.45 million, which included approximately $3 million for information technology. The budget for the first two years included an allocation of $275,000 to the WorkSource Information Technology Workgroup. These funds were used to perform a connectivity study and a feasibility study of the Customer Tracking and Accountability System, which evolved into SKIES. The third year budget included an allocation of $1.9 million for acquisition of SKIES. On April 12, 2000, the Executive Policy Council approved the full expenditure of the $1.9 million by June 30, 2000 to acquire the OSOS system and associated database software. An additional $1.78 million will be provided from federal employment security funds for the implementation and operation of the system. As of the end of February 2002, a total of $4,185,628 had been expended for SKIES. Although not charged against the project, $1.5 million has been expended for Oracle software.

Schedule: The SKIES implementation plan includes these milestones:
- Adopt UWORKS system   March 2000/Complete
- Evaluate the Alpha SKIES application   November 2000/Complete
- System ready for system test   June 2001/Complete
- Conduct User Acceptance Testing (UAT)   September 2001/Complete
- Conduct Pilot   February 2002/Complete
- Begin SKIES statewide implementation   March 2002/ In progress)

Status: In January and February 2002, ESD successfully resolved all issues related to system testing and data conversion. ESD proactively upgraded the memory of the application servers and acquired an additional back-up server to avoid potential performance problems.

ESD conducted an expanded system pilot during the period February 11-22, 2002. The pilot was expanded from two to four sites as part of the risk mitigation plan for employing a statewide implementation. The pilot successfully demonstrated the ability of the application to meet the business needs of WorkSource within the acceptance criteria. ESD also developed and desk checked an extensive implementation plan. However, during partnership training and other implementation preparation activities, ESD observed intermittent connectivity problems for users coming from outside the intergovernmental network through the DIS firewalls. Although the problem only affects approximately 100 users, the SKIES Executive Oversight Committee decided to postpone SKIES implementation pending identification and resolution of the problem. ESD communicated the decision to WorkSource partners who fully support the decision since many of their staff are potentially impacted.

ESD formed and convened a task force to identify and resolve the problem. The task force includes technical application and network experts from Oracle, IBM, DIS and ESD.

Recommendations: DIS recommends that ESD continue to coordinate with DIS and hardware/software vendors to identify and resolve connectivity issues.